



Quarterly Report
BOSNIA-HERCEGOVINA: POLITICAL AND CIVIC ORGANIZING,
PARLIAMENTARY DEVELOPMENT

USAID Cooperative Agreement No. EE-A-00-98-00028-00 and
USAID Associate Award No. 168-A-00-01-00107-001

July 1 to September 30, 2001

I. SUMMARY

Both houses of the Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH) Parliamentary Assembly passed the BiH Permanent Election Law in August, thus fulfilling an important precondition for the country's accession to the Council of Europe. Equally important, the new law stipulates a date for elections in 2002, initiating election planning for the political parties and also for those coordinating the transition of election processes to BiH control. Progress on the legislative front, which included the Republika Srpska National Assembly (RSNA) passage of a new rules of procedure, was not as evident on the political side. Many continue to question the stability of the coalition governments in both the RS and the Federation and the role of the international community is being more heavily scrutinized as parties look to develop their policy platforms for the 2002 elections.

Since 1996, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) has supported the long-term development of political parties, encouraged citizen participation in the political process, and cultivated professional and transparent legislative bodies. The overarching goal of NDI's program is that political party, parliamentary and nongovernmental actors are provided the skills and knowledge they need to contribute to a self-sustaining, peaceful and democratic political system. Since the November 2000 regional elections, NDI's objectives for the political party development program have been to enhance party development and democratization, increase the political participation of women and youth and facilitate an increase in public outreach by parties. In the parliamentary development program, NDI is pursuing the following objectives: developing a Federation parliamentary internship program; increasing the interaction between parliamentary committees and the public; and improving the efficiency and transparency of the RSNA through the development of a new rules of procedure. NDI has expanded its program to work with state-level institutions and is planning work with committees in the BiH Parliament on outreach to nongovernmental organizations; at the same

¹ During the quarter, NDI exhausted its grant monies under Cooperative Agreement No. EE- A-00-98-00028-00 and began spending its new monies for its follow-on program funded through Associate Award No. 168-A-00-01-00107-00.

time, NDI is working with political parties to develop a political party professionals program and to strengthen coalition development.

In this quarter NDI conducted the following activities in its political party, parliamentary and joint institutions development programs:

Political Party Development Program

- Party consultation meetings were held with several program partners to discuss upcoming activities and election preparation;
- Communications training sessions were held with local party branches of the Party of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD); and
- Planning continued for a coalition study mission to Ireland.

Parliamentary Development Program

- Plans were finalized and a memorandum of understanding was drafted for the Federation parliamentary internship program;
- Consultations were conducted with Federation committees to develop the public hearing process; and
- Consultations were held with the RSNA on the completion of the rules of procedure and the proper usage of the new rules.

Joint Institutions and Sustainability Program

- NDI hosted BiH Prime Minister Zlatko Lagumdžija and RS Prime Minister Mladen Ivanic for discussions in Washington with NDI Executive Board Chair and former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright;
- Consultations were held with the OSCE to coordinate work with the joint institutions and introduce NDI's schedule of activities;
- Planning started for a one-day conference on public outreach for committee members and NGOs; and
- NDI BiH staff held a retreat and completed a training session on report writing and strategic planning.

In this quarter NDI achieved the following results:

- Individual party branches of SNSD and the Party for Democratic Progress (PDP) developed and implemented door-to-door surveys;

- For the first time, SNSD organized its own training seminars based on the expressed needs of party members, demonstrating initiative to use its own training resources, reach out to party branches, and conduct inter-election activities;
- Two committees commenced work on developing a public hearing process in the Federation legislature; and
- With NDI assistance, the RSNA drafted and ratified a new rules of procedure that will significantly contribute to regulating and coordinating the procedures of the assembly.

II. BACKGROUND

The question of greater Bosnian ownership of the country's legal and political institutions and processes is at the forefront of current political debate among both nationals and the international community in Bosnia-Herzegovina. High Representative Wolfgang Petrisch continues to press for reform, with particular concern toward refugee return and economic development, and the internal political leadership and momentum necessary to enact these changes. The UN War Crimes Tribunal Chief Prosecutor Carla Del Ponte has also identified an urgent need for greater involvement of Bosnia's national courts in investigating and processing war crimes. Most importantly, however, this need is increasingly recognized and acted on by Bosnia's current leadership. Bosnia's new prime minister and leader of the Alliance for Changes coalition, Zlatko Lagumdžija, has repeatedly highlighted the need for Bosnians to take control of their own political development.

One critical step in this direction is the adoption of an elections law that will allow the Bosnian government to organize its own elections for the first time since the end of the war. A key piece of legislation that has been under debate for several years, the implementation of the new election law allows citizens and politicians to assume greater ownership of their democratic processes and development. Until now, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe had been responsible for organizing and managing elections. While the law passed with a clear majority, controversial provisions in the law remain, including an amendment that denies the right to vote to those that illegally occupy another person's property. Another tenant of the law continues the rules for the election of the tripartite presidency with the Serb member elected exclusively from residents of Republika Srpska and the Muslim and Croat members elected exclusively by Federation citizens.

Following increased pressure on the Republika Srpska (RS) from the international community, the RSNA has approved a law on greater cooperation with the International War Crimes Tribunal (ICTY). While heralded as a positive step by the international community, many in Bosnia were quick to note that the move was largely symbolic as the constitution of Bosnia-Herzegovina already commits both entities to cooperate with The Hague. Also of note, Bosnian Serb General Radislav Krstic recently received the tribunal's first guilty verdict on the charge of genocide. In addition, several of the recent indictments released by the ICTY have been leveled at Bosnian Muslims. These include, most prominently, Federation Refugees Minister Sefer Halilovic, a former general of the wartime Bosnian forces, as well as three other

high ranking retired commanders of the Bosnian Muslim army. These indictments have helped to dissuade fears on the Serb side that the Tribunal unfairly targets the Serb leadership and has encouraged more cooperation with international authorities.

In addition to increased cooperation with international institutions, the RS and the Federation entity governments are working toward harmonizing their respective constitutions, although the timeline on the negotiations is still vague. Meanwhile, there has been considerable flux among BiH's prominent political actors. Ante Jelavic, president of the Croat National Congress (NHS) and BiH's Croatian Democratic Movement (HDZ), was brought before the Sarajevo cantonal court on charges stemming from the attempted secession of the Croat-dominated parts of the Federation this past spring. Related to Jelavic's arrest, there have been growing signs of tension within the HDZ between moderates and the nationalist leadership and a full schism is expected to occur, perhaps resulting in the development of a new party. Additionally, the controversial political figure and founder of the Party for Bosnia-Herzegovina, Haris Silajdzic, announced his withdrawal from politics in mid-September. Silajdzic, who formed the rival Party for Bosnia-Herzegovina (SbiH) as an alternative to the nationalist Party of Democratic Action (SDA), did not specify an exact reason for his withdrawal, but the press cited health problems and the declining popularity of the party.

Since 1996, NDI's political party program has promoted the development of a viable, multiparty system by providing political parties with the tools necessary to strengthen their organizational capacity in order to compete effectively in elections. NDI provides consultations and training seminars that assist select parties² in strengthening internal organization and improving public outreach capabilities. Due to the extended non-election period in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the opportunities that presents, NDI has most recently concentrated efforts on long-term party development issues, such as internal party democratization; financial resource generation and allocation, membership development, policy development and constituent outreach.

The enactment of a new election law not only stipulates the process and rules for the elections but also stipulates an election date. With general elections to be held in October 2002, NDI is now transitioning activity from party sustainability and development to working with parties to develop a long-term strategic approach toward the elections. In this light, NDI has begun working with political parties to identify key individuals and campaign teams within parties that will coordinate party election efforts.

2 Since 1996, NDI has evaluated its political party relationships on the basis of a given party's commitment to the constitutional framework of Bosnia-Herzegovina and peaceful pursuit of political objectives, viability as a representative body of the electorate, and willingness and ability to effectively absorb and apply NDI assistance. Based on these criteria, the primary beneficiaries of NDI's political party program are: the Liberal Democratic Party (LDS); the New Croatian Initiative (NHI); the Party of Social Democrats (SNSD); and Social Democratic Party of Bosnia-Herzegovina (SDP). The following parties receive NDI assistance in multiparty training settings and in response to specific requests for assistance: the Bosnian Patriotic Party (BPS); the Citizens' Democratic Party (GDS); the Croatian Peasant's Party (HSS); the Democratic Party of the RS (DSRS); the Democratic Patriotic Party (DPS); the Democratic People's Union (DNS); the Democratic Socialist Party (DSP); the Party for BiH (SbiH); the Party for Democratic Progress (PDP); the Republican Party (RP); the Serb People's Party (SNS); and the Socialist Party of Republika Srpska (SPRS).

III. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

Political Party Development Program

New Political Party Resident Representative

A new resident representative, John Fraser, joined NDI's BiH staff in July. Fraser assumed responsibility for the implementation and coordination of the party program in the RS and is based in the Banja Luka office. His in-country orientation included meetings with party representatives in both the RS and the Federation and meetings with international community members.

Public Outreach: Door-to-Door Surveys

In preparation for the 2002 elections, NDI is working with political party partners to identify and reach out to members and constituents. Party activities are designed to increase contact with voters in key municipalities and identify voter interests and concerns. As one component of this program, NDI program coordinators in the RS worked with municipal boards of the PDP and SNSD to develop and conduct door-to-door surveys in Boboj, Bijeljina and Pelagicevo. The surveys focused on matters of local and country-wide importance and were designed to gauge local political interests and policy priorities. Question topics included the local economy, the BiH health care system, political corruption, and local infrastructure needs. More than 1,300 contacts were made with voters in both rural and urban areas of the municipalities.

Party Democratization: SNSD Party Branch Communications Training

In July, four training sessions were conducted with SNSD party branches in Laktasi, Brcko, Lucovic, and Trebinje. The sessions emphasized party communications as a means to improve internal party functioning, reach out to constituents, and conduct necessary research for future campaigns. Following presentations by local party officials on internal party communications structure, political marketing and methods of delivering political messages, NDI Country Director Michael Balagus delivered a skills-based component on how to create and target a political message to identified groups of people. The session emphasized close examination of poll-by-poll results from the November 2000 elections, including strategies for identifying voters, recruiting volunteers and developing an overall plan for message development and delivery. A total of 99 participants attended the sessions, including 11 women and 19 youth participants.

World Learning Study Mission

Balagus met with USAID and World Learning officials in July to review and select proposals for a program implementer, coordinate planning for the activity and to set tentative dates for a study mission to Ireland on coalition building.

To begin assembling a list of participants, a series of meetings was held with NDI political party partners. Meetings were held in July with the SNS, PDP, NHI and BiH president Belkic to gauge interest, to seek cooperation and to inform party leaders of program details.

Party Consultations

Party consultations were held in the RS and Federation to assess the current levels of party activities and election planning and to introduce the new Director of Political Party Development in Banja Luka, John Fraser.

NDI representatives Balagus and Fraser met with RS Prime Minister and PDP leader Mladen Ivanic on July 23 to discuss several issues regarding the party and the current RS governing coalition. Due to challenges in managing governmental responsibilities, PDP party activities have dramatically declined. Discussion centered on the role of the PDP in government and a possible restructuring to allow some PDP government ministers to return to party activity. During the meeting it was stressed that the party must prioritize election planning and begin coordinating the activities of its local and central leadership.

Balagus and Fraser met with SNSD leader and former RS Prime Minister Milorad Dodik on August 6, during which Dodik was informed of upcoming NDI activities. Election preparation was discussed as well as relationships and communication with local party branches. A follow-up meeting was held with the municipal board in Pelagicevo to ascertain a local branch perspective on party activities and communication.

Consultations were also held with the Democratic Patriot Party (DPS), the Party of the Social Democratic Center (PSDC) and the SPRS. During each of these meetings, NDI presented upcoming plans and activities to party representatives, with an emphasis on the upcoming central campaign team seminars.

Parliamentary Development Program

Federation

Federation Parliament Internship Program

A series of meetings was held with committee, caucus, and parliamentary administration and university officials to finalize plans for the upcoming Federation internship program. Student qualifications and responsibilities were discussed, as well as proper placement of the interns and the timing of the program. In meetings with the SDP, SDA, and SBiH caucus chairs, the Labor and Social Care Committee, the Education Committee, parliamentary speaker and the chamber secretary, consensus was reached that the pilot semester of the program would begin in late October with an initial group of 10 to 12 students. The students will be placed with select committees, caucuses of the parliament and administrative offices.

Additional consultations on program design and direction were held with parliamentary and university officials and the project proposal was discussed and revised for the academic

calendar. NDI representatives emphasized the roles and responsibilities of the interns, and the management and oversight responsibilities of the intern supervisors. To ensure support for and understanding of the project, a memorandum of understanding was drafted to be signed by NDI, the deputy rector of the University of Sarajevo and the chamber secretary of the House of Representatives.

Parliamentary Committee Outreach

In order to improve constituent outreach activities, NDI met with select committees to discuss how to publicize legislative activities and encourage public participation in the legislative process. In separate meetings with the Labor and Social Care Committee and the Education Committee, NDI representatives Elvis Zutic and Leonard Kuchar discussed the development of guidelines for committee members on how to conduct public hearings.

Kuchar appeared as a witness before a joint commission of members of the House of Representatives and the House of Peoples to provide direction to a public hearing on the issue of young people leaving BiH. The Education Committee members selected the topic as one of political urgency and public interest. Kuchar discussed the rationale for public hearings, the responsibility of committee members in the process, and the methods for conducting the hearing.

Republika Srpska

Rules of Procedure Development

Following several consultations with Zoran Deric, vice-president of the RSNA, and other members of the rules of procedure working committee, NDI provided comments on the draft rules of procedure and proposed amendments. Drafts of the rules were circulated to the caucuses for review, with the objective of introducing the rules during the September legislative session. During the presentation of the deliberations on the rules to the assembly, the vice-chair of the Legal and Legislative Committee publicly thanked NDI for assistance with the project.

The rules passed with a clear majority. NDI has made an English language translation of the rules available to international organizations and the RSNA. NDI also completed a table of contents for the local language and English versions of the rules to facilitate usage.

Joint Institutions and Sustainability Program

Meetings and Consultations with Senior Party Leadership

In honor of BiH Foreign Minister Zlatko Lagumdžija's visit to the U.S. the National Democratic Institute organized a formal dinner at the Washington's Art Club, on July 10, 2001. Approximately 42 people attended, including prominent politicians, journalists, USAID and State Department representatives, and international experts. NDI Executive Board Chair and former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright delivered the welcoming address, and NDI Board Member Geraldine Ferraro moderated the discussion. The dinner enabled U.S. political

and diplomatic leaders to hear directly from a prominent Bosnian politician and converse on the political and democratization challenges and opportunities facing Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Albright expressed satisfaction at the successful establishment of the Alliance for Change in BiH and of the non-nationalist government, thanking Lagumdžija for the outstanding efforts in achieving that goal over the past few years. Lagumdžija echoed Secretary Albright's statements that in order for democratic change to occur, it is essential to have the support both, people within the country that implement change, and those in the international community who share the same values. As an example of such long-standing support, he cited the efforts of NDI in providing support and acting in partnership with democratic forces within BiH.

NDI also arranged for consultations between Secretary Albright and RS Prime Minister Mladen Ivanic to discuss the political environment in the Republika Srpska, assess PDP political needs and interests, and solicit Ivanic's interest in a World Learning-sponsored study mission to Ireland on coalition building. Secretary Albright discussed political strategy and challenges facing the PDP in working with the SDS while trying to promote pro-Dayton reforms in the RS. Albright also stressed the importance of further progress in the RS on cooperation with the ICTY.

OSCE Coordination

In September, NDI representatives Shauna Martin and John Fraser held consultations with the Senior Democratization Officer for OSCE Banja Luka, Gerard Keown. NDI shared information on planned program activities for the coming year and discussed ways to ensure that NDI's program is complementary to the OSCE program. It was stressed that the OSCE should play a coordinating role so the international organizations working in the area of legislative democracy programs will be able to avoid unnecessary duplication of activities. A decision was made to hold a follow-up meeting in Sarajevo to discuss program activity coordination with additional democratization officers and NDI staff.

BiH Staff Planning Retreat

An all-staff retreat was held from September 5 through 7 to discuss staff development, coordination between NDI programs, and finalize a workplan and timeline for activities through October 2002. As the NDI program is embarking on a new program staffing structure, which includes new programmatic elements, staff focused on coordinating activities, the use of trainers, and program resources among the different program components. In addition, the new work with BiH joint institutions was discussed as it relates to staff responsibilities.

In order to promote local staff development and capacity building, Mary Markowicz, NDI deputy director of program coordination, conducted two seminars on report writing and strategic planning. The objective of the seminars was to provide local staff with the skills to more fully participate in the program planning process and to improve program evaluation and follow-up.

IV. RESULTS

Political Party Development Program

Objective: Parties enhance their long-term development and sustainability through building their organizational and operational capacity and democratizing internal structures.

- In recognition of the need to build its organizational capacity and facilitate internal party communications, SNSD local party branches organized and coordinated its own training sessions on communications and message development training sessions, as a result of NDI assistance. This is the first time the party has coordinated an internal training session and formally responded to the expressed needs of party members. The sessions passed on skills that will build the party operational capacity by enhancing membership and volunteer recruitment. The sessions also represent an effort on the part of party leadership to provide its own training resources, reach out to party branches, and conduct inter-election activities.

Objective: Parties conduct public outreach and pro-actively engage citizens in a non-election period.

- Individual party branches (SNSD and PDP in Doboj, Pelagicevo, and Bijeljina) developed and implemented door-to-door surveys to research public interests and voter concerns, contacting more than 1,300 people. The parties are also planning follow-up surveys.

Objective: Increase political participation of women and youth.

- Following the NDI School for the Development of Democratic Leadership in June, participants began work with the University of Sarajevo to plan and implement a school on the parliamentary system and public participation in the legislative process.

Parliamentary Development Program

Federation

Objective: Parliamentary staff resources are increased through the establishment of an internship program.

- Planning was completed for the internship program, which will begin in October. An MOU was drafted to formalize the responsibilities of the University of Sarajevo, the Federation parliament and NDI.

Objective: Committees improve their ability to increase the efficiency of the legislative process and increase public participation.

- Two committees commenced work on developing a public hearing process in the legislature. After identifying a topic of public concern and legislative interest, the

committees called on witnesses to investigate how to conduct a public hearing and are moving forward with research on the topic.

Republika Srpska

Objective: A more organized and efficient legislative process is created.

- The Republika Srpska National Assembly passed rules of procedure and introduced the new legislation to the public as a result of NDI's concerted efforts toward this initiative. These rules will serve to regulate the procedures of the Assembly, greatly improve the conduct of parliamentary debate, and enable MPs to more fully understand their roles and responsibilities.

V. EVALUATION

Political Party Development Program

The plans for the coalition building study mission to Ireland did not proceed as expected due to a lack of timely party response to NDI. Despite several meetings with party leaders and the expressed interest of all parties in participating, no participant confirmations were received by the set deadline. Planning continues for the study mission, with a renewed focus on party meetings and a postponement of the trip to late 2001 or early 2002.

The lack of party communication also delayed the process for NDI to introduce its programming to party officials and discuss upcoming training sessions. Meetings with party leaders were difficult to schedule. This was due, in part, to the summer holiday season, but also to the difficulty many parties are experiencing in coordinating government responsibilities with the continued need for party development.

Two factors should improve that situation in coming months. NDI has a new political party representative who will begin work in October and devote her time to party development and election preparation. With the elections scheduled for October 5, 2002, the parties have only one year to prepare and conduct a campaign plan. This should lend more urgency to their training needs and participation in NDI's program activities.

Parliamentary Development Program

Federation

Parliamentary Development Director Leonard Kuchar announced his resignation from NDI in late August. His departure has led to discussions as to how to revise the program to increase the level of activity and work with the committees and caucuses.

Republika Srpska

The program had its biggest success to date with the passing of the new RSNA rules of procedure. With the adoption of the new rules, the assembly has taken a major step toward an

improved legislative process, and NDI has fulfilled an important objective in its RS parliamentary work. The passage of the rules also highlighted the appreciation of assembly representatives for NDI's work. NDI Staff members Shauna Martin and Vladimira Drljaca were thanked during the assembly session for their assistance and support.

The program will now move forward and focus on work with the committees and caucuses. The new rules have provided an improved framework for committee and caucus legislative strategy and NDI's representatives will use that framework as a means for upcoming workshops.

Joint Institutions and Sustainability Program

The lack of a full-time staff person devoted to joint institutions programming and the relative inactivity of the BiH parliament during the summer months has hindered this program's development. In the last quarter, there was limited access to politicians and the information necessary to design program activities. However, with staff specifically assigned to oversee this program area and with increased coordination with the OSCE, the program will be renewed and fully engaged with NDI's other areas of programming.

VI. FUTURE ACTIVITIES

Political Party Development Program

- A new political party resident representative, Kate Fearon, will join the BiH staff in October. Fearon's responsibilities will include directing the Federation political party program, coordinating work with the RS political party program, and working with NDI's program coordinators.
- A women's conference will be held from October 18 through October 21, 2001 in Tuzla, BiH. The conference will bring together approximately 100 women from a variety of fields, including business, media, politics, academics and the nongovernmental sector. Presenters from BiH and the Southeast Europe region will conduct sessions on the status of women in BiH, barriers to democratic participation, women's health issues, representation in the media and legal issues.
- A central election training cycle will be conducted in November for political parties from the RS and the Federation. The sessions will provide party campaign teams with information to develop a campaign plan, conduct market research, develop and communicate an effective campaign message and policy platform, coordinate Get-Out-the-Vote activities, and manage campaign finances.
- A curriculum and selection process will be developed in anticipation of the launching of a political party professionals program, designed to develop and train a core group of emerging political leaders. NDI will begin an application process in order to select 25 to 30 participants from a variety of political parties.

Parliamentary Development Program

Federation

- The Federation parliamentary internship program will facilitate the first round of internships for University of Sarajevo students. Applicants will be vetted through an extensive selection process. Afterwards, those chosen to participate will receive an orientation on basic skills, coordinated by NDI. The class of 10 to 12 interns will then participate in an eight-week internship with various members of the Federation parliament, including select party caucuses and committees, and the parliamentary administration.
- A one-day meeting between NGOs and parliamentary committees will be conducted to increase parliamentary awareness of citizen groups and to promote more effective constituent outreach. This meeting will include NGOs from throughout BiH and parliamentary representatives from the Federation parliament, RS National Assembly, and the BiH parliament. The goal of the meeting
- An orientation seminar will be conducted for local councilors and party officials to discuss how local members can be useful to parties between elections. The seminar will focus on message development and maintaining party visibility between elections.

Republika Srpska

- In co-sponsorship with the United Kingdom Civil Service College, a one-day seminar on legislative transparency and accountability will be conducted for ministers of the RS National Assembly.
- Consultations and workshops with RSNA committee leaders will be held on the newly established rules of procedure. NDI representatives will familiarize the committee leaders with the implications of the rules and work with them on new strategies for question period and other parliamentary activities. NDI will also push for the publication of the rules for constituents.
- NDI will work with the parliamentary leadership on conducting staff evaluations and devising a staff plan.

Joint Institutions and Sustainability Program

- NDI will continue to work with World Learning to develop a program for BiH party leaders, including conducting meetings with party leaders and assisting in planning a study mission to Ireland.
- NDI met with the Centers for Civic Initiatives (CCI) on September 26 to conduct preliminary planning for a joint parliamentary committee and NGO conference. CCI had gauged the interest of NGOs during a meeting on September 15, and organizations will confirm their interest in participating by early October. This one-day conference, would

include NGOs from throughout BiH and committee members from the RSNA, Federation parliament and BiH parliament, and it would be held to introduce methods by which organizations can improve access to legislative and political leaders and by which elected officials can more effectively reach out to constituents and interest groups. CCI and NDI will co-sponsor the conference and invite a total of approximately 50 NGO representatives and 50 committee members.